United Nations system CEB/2014/2

Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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Second regular session of 2014
World Bank Group Headquarters, Washington, D.C.,
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Summary of conclusions

I. Introduction

1. The second regular session of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2014, chaired by the Secretary-General and hosted by the World Bank Group, was held at World Bank Group Headquarters in Washington, D.C., on 20 and 21 November 2014.

2. The formal session was held on the morning of 20 November. In the afternoon, the Board held its fourth review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals at the country level, followed by the second part of the formal session.

3. On the morning of 21 November, the Board held a private meeting and considered political issues on the agenda of the United Nations, followed by a special session on the response of the United Nations system to the Ebola crisis. A retreat was held in the afternoon, during which executive heads had an exchange of views on the post-2015 process, with a particular focus on the fitness for purpose of the United Nations system.

4. The present report covers the outcome of the formal session of the second regular session of CEB for 2014 and the special session on the response to the Ebola crisis.

5. The agenda of the formal session was as follows:

1. Reports of High-level Committees to the Board:
   (a) United Nations Development Group;
   (b) High-level Committee on Management;
   (c) High-level Committee on Programmes;
   (d) Additional briefings.
2. Issues of system-wide concern: data revolution and accountability.

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3. Other matters:

(a) Dates and venue of future session;

(b) Nomination of the new Chair of the High-level Committee on Management;

(c) Tribute to departing members;

(d) Special session on the United Nations system response to the Ebola crisis.

II. Reports of High-level Committees

A. United Nations Development Group

6. The Chair of the United Nations Development Group updated the Board on results achieved by the Group in the past six months, including the report of the meeting of the Group, held on 11 July 2014, and key decisions taken at the most recent meeting of the Group, on 14 November 2014.

7. The Group continues to place the highest priority on ensuring that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system is coherently implemented across the system. Since the first regular session of CEB of 2014, the Group has supported improvements in monitoring progress towards the objectives of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. Data are being collected from United Nations country teams and other sources and analysed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in order to inform the quadrennial comprehensive policy review monitoring and reporting framework. As a result, the report of the Secretary-General on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review has an expanded quantitative and qualitative data section to assist efforts in measuring progress (see A/70/62-E/2015/4).

8. The Chair of the Group highlighted that since the first regular session of CEB of 2014, held in May, in Rome, the integrated package of support for the standard operating procedures that will help the United Nations to deliver collaboratively at the country level as part of "Delivering as one" had been developed and endorsed by the Group in July, with a foreword by the Secretary-General. The standard operating procedures have very strong buy-in from across the system. Of the 18 Principals of the Group, who signed a joint letter on the implementation of the package, 16 have also disseminated the operating procedures to their regional and country offices and the procedures are being rolled-out by field teams. The package includes hands-on guidance for operations on the ground, with an emphasis on joined up approaches in all operational areas to better deliver together for results. The Chair emphasized that the operating procedures have to be adopted by all country teams (44 countries, as of the date of the session, had requested the adoption of the "Delivering as one" approach, and the number is growing). The United Nations system needed to follow through on the implementation of the operating procedures. Building on those procedures, the Chair stressed that the system can, and must start to, implement a number of the decisions on key issues coming out of the deliberations in the High-level Committee on Management, the High-level Committee on Programmes and the Group on the system being "fit for purpose".

9. Implementation of the Group's Plan of Action for Headquarters, developed alongside the standard operating procedures, is well under way. So far, 24 actions out of a total of 55 are complete, while some 10 to 12 actions need urgent attention. The Chair of the Group urged Principals to take this up within their entities so as to give the Plan of Action another push towards full implementation.

10. The Chair reported that the Group had reviewed and suggested updated working mechanisms. The Group supported the first terms of reference for the Group, which is consistent with that of the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes and framed by membership of CEB and a definition of the United Nations development system. The updated working methods for the Group bring strengthened leadership, accountability, a focus on results and support at the country level, in order to be better organized for the post-2015 development agenda. The Chair requested the Group's Principals to ensure that entities bring their ideas and expertise into the work of the new Sustainable Development Working Group of the United Nations Development Group, to further deliberate on the means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

11. Putting the Resident Coordinator system on a predictable and secure funding basis through system-wide cost-sharing has been a major milestone of the Group. The agreement is now in its first year of implementation. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shoulders the major cost and the system cost-shares approximately a quarter of the total. With the reform of membership of the Group, there was agreement in principle that only those providing their full contribution to the cost-sharing will be members of the Group. Not all agencies have contributed fully in the 2014-15 biennium, and strategic reserves and donor contributions had been mobilized to fill the gap, but are not available for the next biennium. The Chair stressed that all members of the Group are expected to pay in full for the biennium 2016-2017, with ample time to include the costs in their respective budgets. The Chair highlighted that the first-time contribution by the Secretariat of the United Nations would cover almost half of the funding gap for the current biennium, pending approval of the budget in the Fifth Committee. The Group would inform members of the amount required for the biennium 2016-2017. As agreed, the Group would provide reporting on the cost-sharing arrangement.

12. The Chair emphasized that the Group, through its Human Rights Working Group, is fully engaged in support of the Action Plan for the Human Rights Up Front initiative, with ongoing strong collaboration with the Office of the Deputy Secretary-General. The Deputy Secretary-General had joined the most recent meeting of the Group to discuss the Group's engagement in supporting the roll-out of the Action Plan in the field. At the global level, the Group received positive feedback from resident coordinators on that collaboration. Since June 2014, the Human Rights Working Group had deployed nine in-country and two regional human rights advisers to support the capacities of resident coordinators, country teams and regional United Nations Development Group teams on human rights. It was hoped that an updated human rights guidance note for resident coordinators would be shared with all country teams before the end of 2014, which would support them in taking forward their responsibilities in that area.

13. The Chair congratulated all those who had contributed to the post-2015 national dialogues for the success of the Group's side event during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, entitled "Moving to implementation". The

dialogues were undertaken in more than 50 countries to maintain bottom-up engagement in shaping the new agenda. They laid the groundwork for partnerships needed on the "softer" means of implementation of the new agenda. Financing in this context was important, but in order to move the post-2015 development agenda forward, the United Nations also needed to do things differently. The Chair emphasized the importance of the role of local governments and effective institutions, participatory monitoring and accountability, the role of the private sector and the recognition of culture and values in this context.

14. The Chair highlighted some key proposals from the Group's process on the United Nations being fit for purpose. First, on greater multi-stakeholder engagement, the Organization must reach out to key State and non-state actors and stakeholders to involve them more in planning and monitoring, knowledge-sharing and advocacy efforts and in the design of the new round of United Nations country frameworks that will respond to the post-2015 agenda. The Organization needed to be as participatory as it asks Governments to be. Second, the Organization's development policies needed to be more integrated, in support of Governments and national stakeholders who are getting ready with their national plans and budgets to address a multidimensional post-2015 development agenda, building on the lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals. Third, in order to do so, the Organization needed to create and facilitate issue-based platforms. To make the United Nations system more "coalition-ready", institutional bottlenecks must be identified and resolved, such as legal and regulatory frameworks that limit entities from working easily and with agility to match capacities as needed. The Chair stressed that a more partnership friendly business model to do such work together could be found and that there were good examples on the ground.

15. The Chair emphasized that the United Nations needed to also rethink its presence in the field and move from a representational presence to a more substantive presence, with joined-up expertise for sustainable development on the ground. She also highlighted the need to actively engage in shaping the new United Nations partnership and programme frameworks with countries. The Chair noted that the alignment of corporate strategic plans with the post-2015 agenda would actually be quite difficult to achieve before Member States had completed their deliberations, but would be done as soon as possible thereafter. The Chair underlined that pooled funding mechanisms based on issue or thematic platforms would work well for the post-2015 agenda. It would be important for funding partners to also rally behind a more coherent United Nations and support funding mechanisms that reinforce the unity of the system, rather than dividing it. On the concept of a "One United Nations civil service", the Chair noted that the experiences of funds, programmes and specialized agencies had shown that different entities require different models and conditions of service. As discussed in the session on data, the Chair emphasized the importance of better data and data that leave no one behind and further highlight information and trends on inequalities.

16. The Chair stressed that the post-2015 development framework would be a much broader agenda than the current framework. In that framework, the United Nations would be a smaller player in terms of financial contributions, but a key strategic and political partner for all countries. The Chair called on the members of CEB to support the actions needed going forward and to task the three Committees on next steps.

17. The Secretary-General noted that the actions proposed by the Group would be discussed on the following day and would incorporate the very useful thoughts on the United Nations being fit for purpose coming out of the discussions of the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the Group.

18. The Board took note of the progress and endorsed the report of the meeting of the United Nations Development Group held on 11 July 2014.

B. High-level Committee on Management

19. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Management introduced the report on the Committee's twenty-eighth session, held on 8 October 2014 at United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Headquarters in New York (CEB/2014/5).

20. The twenty-eighth session was a special session for the High-level Committee on Management, as it was mostly dedicated to elaborating the Committee's contribution to the Board's discussion on making the United Nations system fit for purpose for the post-2015 development agenda.

21. The Chair noted that the Committee had started an internal assessment of its own fitness for purpose two years earlier, with a process of reflection and analysis that culminated with the development of the strategic plan for 2013-2016 (see CEB/2013/3, annex IV), subsequently approved by CEB. The strategic plan, with its five strategic priorities, represented a key contribution to the post-2015 "Fit for purpose" strategy of CEB. Furthermore, the Committee was already delivering concrete and valuable outcomes in response to the plan's priorities.

22. Among the current top priorities for the Committee, the Chair listed the active engagement with the International Civil Service Commission in the context of its review of the conditions of service for United Nations system staff. He recalled that a high-level Steering Group led by the Vice-Chair of the High-level Committee on Management and composed of selected representatives of the Committee was providing strategic guidance throughout this exercise, which was now reaching the crucial time when concrete proposals would be developed and put on the table. It was therefore important that the organizations continued to work together in this process, so as to ensure that their needs and requirements would be properly addressed within a new United Nations common system, that would be designed and put in place as a result of the review. In doing so, organizations should be strategic and rise above the current contingent circumstances and constraints, looking ahead to an outcome that would be in place for many years.

23. Besides the above-mentioned compensation review, the Chair of the Committee informed the Board that the International Civil Service Commission had confirmed its recommendation to the General Assembly to extend the mandatory age of separation to age 65 for current staff, starting as of 1 January 2016, and that a deliberation thereon by the Assembly was expected by the end of 2014.

24. The Chair was pleased to report the completion of work on a reference risk management, oversight and accountability model, in direct response to the Committee's mandate, in its strategic plan, for the development of "a consolidated and trust-based relationship with Member States on the level and quality of controls

in place in the organizations to allow for rationalized oversight, more focus on key risks and better internal resource allocation".

25. The new model recognized the value and applicability of an internationally recognized standard developed by a professional body, the Institute of Internal Auditors, entitled "The three lines of defense in effective risk management and control". The model represented a strong and defendable reference, which all organizations could adhere to with the necessary adjustments and variations that their differences require. It would also strengthen organizations' common positioning with Member States in discussions on oversight and monitoring.

26. The Chair informed the Board that, in response to a request by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Committee had established a dedicated group to develop, in close coordination with the United Nations Development Group, a United Nations system policy to deal with fraud cases by implementing partners in a consistent and coordinated manner. The issue had resonated loudly with members of the Committee, as organizations wanted to engage more with partners and they were moving to put systems and tools in place that would allow them to do so with the proper assessment and mitigation of the inherent risks, and in a fair sharing of such risks with all stakeholders, including Member States.

27. In concluding, the Chair brought to the attention of the Board, for its consideration and approval, the new United Nations system policy on the organizational resilience management system (see CEB/2014/5, annex III). Recognizing the need to clearly articulate the roles, responsibilities and relationships of the actors involved in emergency preparedness and response, the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/254 A, had mandated the development of an organizational resilience management framework. The undertaking was embraced by all members of the Committee, who strongly shared the need to set the fundamental provisions to enhance the ability of organizations to manage increasingly complex operational risks.

28. CEB endorsed the report of the Committee on its twenty-eighth session, including the United Nations system policy on the organizational resilience management system.

C. High-level Committee on Programmes

29. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Programmes introduced the report on the Committee's twenty-eighth session, held in New York on 10 October 2014 (CEB/2014/6).

30. The Committee, building on the joint session held with the High-level Committee on Management on 9 October, engaged in active and constructive discussions on its role in advancing the actions required to render the United Nations system fit for the purpose of contributing to the implementation of a post-2015 development agenda. With the joint session as an impetus to refocus its raison d'être and reinvigorate its work, the High-level Committee on Programmes affirmed its eagerness to assume its core responsibility as a think tank to assist CEB in responding coherently to key strategic issues of concern to the entire United Nations system.

31. The Chair underlined that the Committee had a particularly relevant role in advancing the system's "fit-for-purpose" efforts, especially in the development of issue-based coalitions, one of the key action recommendations emanating from the joint session. In that context, the Committee agreed to focus, from October 2014 and for a period of 12 to 15 months thereafter, on youth employment and urbanization as a prototype subject area for such coalitions.

32. Youth employment was a multifaceted strategic issue, to which the United Nations system had much to contribute. A global challenge of great concern to all Member States, it also corresponded to the universal nature of sustainable development goals, with a call for global action having been included in the proposal of the Open Working Group (see A/68/970 and Corr.1). Similarly, the process of urbanization was among the most significant global trends, influencing political processes and socioeconomic development. The Committee felt that, in order to address the challenges and opportunities it posed, a coherent system-wide approach was needed, especially in the lead-up to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in 2016.

33. The Chair stated that by forging effective multi-stakeholder coalitions around those two issues, the Committee aimed to operationalize the five key elements of the post-2015 development agenda, identified by CEB as universality, integration, equality, human rights and data. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair sought the Board's endorsement of that approach as a prototype for implementing the change agenda and, in particular, for enhancing policy coherence and coordination in the service of improved programme delivery. Such an approach would also offer opportunities to further deepen collaboration within and among organizations, as well as between the High-level Committee on Programmes, the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management. In this context, he reported on the good progress already made in strengthening alignment between the efforts of the High-level Committees and the Group.

34. The Chair then turned to the two proposed statements by CEB, submitted for the Board's endorsement. The first was related to the convening of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, in March 2015 in Sendai, Japan, in order to highlight the United Nations system's commitment to disaster risk reduction and the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience (see CEB/2014/6, annex III). The second statement was prepared for the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, to be commemorated at the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, to be convened from 9 to 20 March 2015 (see CEB/2014/6, annex IV). The statement reaffirmed the United Nations system's shared commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Chair expressed his appreciation to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and to the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction for their coordination of the preparation of both statements.

35. The Chair informed CEB that the Committee had also taken up the issue of cybersecurity and cybercrime and endorsed, for the Board's approval, the United Nations system internal coordination plan on cybersecurity and cybercrime. The plan was developed through an intense, at times challenging, process of consultation

and represented a much welcomed joint approach between the High-level Committee on Programmes and the High-level Committee on Management.

36. Turning to climate change, the Chair informed the Board that the Committee had approved the terms of reference of its Working Group on Climate Change (see CEB/2014/6, annex V). The Working Group, which had made important contributions to strengthening system-wide support for a climate agreement and sustained climate action on the ground, was due to hold, for the first time, a joint "One United Nations" exhibit at the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Lima. He expressed appreciation for the Secretary-General's leadership on climate change and assured CEB that the United Nations system was well aligned and ready to support the Secretary-General in that regard.

37. In conclusion, the Chair reiterated that, under the guidance of CEB, the Committee stood ready to bring policy coherence, programmatic coordination and an innovation agenda to a higher strategic level, by focusing on a select number of priority issues. In that regard, youth employment and urbanization offered good examples of how all entities in the United Nations system could work jointly in the context of the fit-for-purpose efforts. He emphasized the Committee's full commitment to supporting CEB in the transition to a sustainable development agenda. Finally, the Chair paid tribute to the excellent contribution of the Committee's new Vice-Chair and thanked the International Labour Organization (ILO) for making her services available.

38. CEB thanked the Chair for his briefing and endorsed the report of the High-level Committee on Programmes on its twenty-eighth session, including the statements of the Board to be presented during the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and at the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the terms of reference for the Committee's Working Group on Climate Change (see paras. 34 and 36 above).

D. Additional briefings

1. Cybersecurity and cybercrime

39. Turning to the issue of cybersecurity and cybercrime, the Secretary-General noted that the Chairs of both the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes had touched on that issue during their reports, and invited the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to comment on recent developments, as called for by the Board at its second regular session of 2013.

40. The Secretary-General of ITU noted that, at its second regular session of 2013, CEB had reached a significant coordination milestone by endorsing the "United Nations-wide framework on cybersecurity and cybercrime" (see CEB/2013/2, para. 85 and annex III). The Board had gone further, calling upon ITU, together with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UNDP and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and in close coordination with the High-level Committee on Management, the High-level

Committee on Programmes and the United Nations Development Group, to develop an action plan to address a growing urgency to protect the work of the United Nations system and the populations that are served by the system. He noted that the "United Nations system internal coordination plan on cybersecurity and cybercrime" currently before the Board, which was prepared by the lead agencies, as well as by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, had been finalized through extensive system-wide consultation and had been endorsed by the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes at their most recent sessions. He also noted that in the four years since raising the issue, cyberthreats and cybercrime had grown extensively, with harm coming to nations, businesses and individuals. The plan, which included principles and actions for organizations, was built on the framework and constituted an important step tor the United Nations system in working together to make cyberspace a safer place and in promoting trust and confidence in information and communications technologies. He concluded his remarks by calling on CEB to endorse the plan.

41. During the ensuing discussion, CEB members thanked the Secretary-General of ITU for his leadership on that critical issue, agreed that the plan enhanced internal coordination within the United Nations system and welcomed its broad range of topic areas, including, inter alia, access to information and privacy. It was noted that UNESCO would organize, in March 2015, an international multi-stakeholder conference relating to such issues, where a first draft of a comprehensive study on Internet-related issues would be discussed by participants from governments, civil society, academia, the private sector, the technical community, intergovernmental and international organizations, as well as leaders, innovators and pioneers in the Internet governance space. CEB members were all invited to the event.

42. The Secretary-General thanked ITU and all CEB members for their active participation in the development of the plan.

43. CEB thanked the Secretary-General of ITU for his remarks and endorsed the United Nations system internal coordination plan on cybersecurity and cybercrime, which was reviewed and submitted to the Board for endorsement by both the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes. The Board concluded its discussion by suggesting that, given the fast-changing landscape in the definition and practice of cybersecurity, it would wish to review the internal document after two years.

2. UN-Water

44. In his capacity as Chair of UN-Water, the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization provided an update on the activities of UN-Water. In opening his presentation, he noted that World Toilet Day for 2014 had been commemorated on 19 November, focusing on the theme of equality and dignity. The campaign sought to inspire action to end open defecation and put the spotlight on how access to improved sanitation had a positive impact on health, education and personal safety, especially for women and girls. Since its designation by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/291, in 2013, World Toilet Day, which is coordinated by UN-Water, had already contributed to greater sensitization of the importance of sanitation in sustainable development. On the occasion of World Toilet Day, UN-Water, under the leadership of the World Health Organization (WHO), launched the 2014 edition of the *Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water*.

45. Drawing the attention of the Board to the system-wide activities of UN-Water, the Chair highlighted UN-Water support to the post-2015 process, including the sustainable development goals, which resulted in a common position among the members of UN-Water on possible water-related goals and targets, an approach that was appreciated by Member States. Looking ahead, UN-Water would continue to consolidate the United Nations system's water-related experience and provide Member States with further technical support on issues related to measurability, monitoring and implementation of water-related sustainable development goals.

46. Turning to the celebration of World Water Day, to be held on 22 March 2015, the Chair noted that the commemoration in 2015 would focus on the topic of water and sustainable development and would be coordinated by UNDP. On World Water Day, UN-Water would also launch the World Water Development Report for 2015, published by UNESCO, on the theme of water and sustainable development. World Water Day in 2016 would focus on water and jobs, under the leadership of ILO. In concluding, the Chair thanked the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Office for Project Services for its secretariat and administrative support to UN-Water and informed CEB that the next meeting of UN-Water would be held in February 2015 in Nairobi, hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

47. Adding to the Chair's presentation, the Deputy Secretary-General observed that sanitation, development, human rights and dignity were issues that were closely interlinked. World Toilet Day was an important example of a horizontal approach that favoured dynamic collaboration among a range of actors and across sectors.

48. CEB members thanked the Chair for the briefing and for his leadership of UN-Water.

3. Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board

49. The Director General of UNESCO briefed CEB on the work of the Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board, noting that the Advisory Board was established in September 2013 during the inaugural meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the General Assembly and is hosted by UNESCO. Aimed at strengthening the interface between science and policy, the Board brings together 26 eminent scientists, half of whom are women, representing all regions and many scientific disciplines, ranging from the natural sciences and engineering to the social and human sciences. Board members serve on a pro bono basis for a period of two years. The Advisory Board was launched in January 2014 in Berlin by the Secretary-General, in the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and 500 policymakers, scientists, academics and members of the media.

50. The central function of the Advisory Board is to provide advice on science, technology and innovation for sustainable development to the Secretary-General and to the executive heads of United Nations organizations. The Advisory Board has organized itself, at present, around four work streams: (a) identifying the kind of science and multidisciplinary approaches needed for sustainable development; (b) linkages between science and society and the mobilization of all stakeholders for sustainable development; (c) new approaches, modalities and processes to better integrate science into policymaking; and (d) the relevance of science for the sustainable development goals.

51. The Advisory Board had already produced several policy briefs and recommendations for the Secretary-General and Member States on a range of issues, including the role of sciences, technology and innovation for the definition of the sustainable development goals and related targets; the interface between science and policy in addressing climate change; and the importance of equitable access to data of good quality.

52. In concluding, the Director General invited the members of CEB to be represented as observers at the second meeting of the Advisory Board, to be held at UNESCO Headquarters on 10 and 11 December 2014. The main objective of the meeting in Paris would be to define the Advisory Board's future work programme, in close alignment with major United Nations events and processes in 2015.

53. CEB members thanked the Director General for her briefing.

4. Drugs and crime

54. The Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, briefed the Board on United Nations system action in the area of drugs and crime, with a particular focus on the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem, to be held in 2016, and the Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for 2015. He noted that the intergovernmental Commission on Narcotic Drugs was leading the preparatory process for the special session. As part of the preparations, a high-level review had been held in March 2014 under the auspices of the Commission, which brought together 1,300 participants from 129 Member States, United Nations entities, civil society, the scientific community and youth organizations. Member States had been engaged in consultations on a resolution on international cooperation against the world drug problem, which, after its adoption by the General Assembly, was expected to provide further impetus to the special session (see General Assembly resolution 69/201).

55. While the process was fundamentally led by Member States, the success of the special session would rely on the inputs from many stakeholders, including the United Nations system. In particular, the United Nations system was playing an important role in supporting Member States in their effort to ensure that the special session contributed to an actual assessment of the world drug problem, including achievements and challenges. In that context, the Executive Director pointed out that the *World Drug Report 2015*, published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), would focus on health and development, which would provide an important analytical input to the special session. Turning to the related work of the United Nations Task Force on Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking (an inter-agency mechanism established by the Secretary-General in 2011 and co-chaired by UNODC and the Department of Political Affairs), he noted that the Task Force had developed a strategy as an inter-agency input for the special session, which included key messages and a road map for guiding the United Nations system on the issue. Additional information on the special session and the preparatory process leading up to it could be found at www.unodc.org.

56. As regards United Nations system support for crime prevention, the Executive Director stated that the next session of the Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the highest level international forum to discuss the challenges of transnational organized crime, would be held in Doha, in April 2015. He added that

active participation by United Nations Principals in the Congress and its various high-level events would demonstrate United Nations system support for effective criminal justice institutions in conformity with the rule of law and human rights. He concluded by informing the Board that the report by UNODC on human trafficking would be launched on 24 November 2014.

57. CEB thanked the Executive Director of UNODC and Director General of the United Nations Office at Vienna for his briefing.

5. World Summit on the Information Society

58. Noting that preparations had begun for a high-level event of the General Assembly on the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in December 2015, the Secretary-General invited ITU and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to provide comments on activities on that topic.

59. The Secretary-General of ITU began his remarks by noting that a high-level event on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit had taken place in Geneva in June 2014, with the objective of providing the necessary vision for the way forward beyond 2015 and of ensuring that information and communications technologies remained high on the political agenda over the next decade. Two consensus documents, developed using an open and inclusive preparatory process known as the World Summit Multi-stakeholder Preparatory Platform, had emerged from the event, a statement on the implementation of World Summit outcomes and a vision for the World Summit beyond 2015". In addition, ITU informed CEB that a comprehensive study on a final review of World Summit targets, outlining achievements, challenges and the way forward, had been launched, which evaluated the progress in achieving the targets established at the World Summit.

60. The Secretary-General of ITU also noted that ITU had recently concluded its nineteenth Plenipotentiary Conference, hosted by the Republic of Korea. During the conference, which brought together the 193 Member States of ITU and 700 sector members, the outcome documents of the 10-year review of the World Summit had been endorsed and ITU had been called upon to continue related activities. In addition, the conference had adopted the "Connect 2020 Agenda for Global Telecommunication/ICT Development" framework, which included a set of global goals and targets on information and communications technologies, and invited Member States to identify institutional linkages between the World Summit beyond 2015 and the post-2015 development agenda. He underscored the need to ensure that the two important global agendas come together.

61. In concluding his remarks, the Secretary-General of ITU encouraged heads of other United Nations entities, particularly those facilitating Action Lines, to pursue activities that would result in a fully measurable framework for the implementation of Action Lines being established. He noted that much progress had been made the 2003 and 2005 phases of the World Summit, but that more was needed to make the world a better place for all, as the global knowledge society was ushered in.

62. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs thanked the Secretary-General of ITU for his comprehensive overview of the activities relating to the tenth anniversary of the World Summit and noted the close working relationship between ITU and the Department on that issue. He provided CEB with

an overview of the future of the World Summit, noting that four components for the high-level meeting were outlined in General Assembly resolution 68/302, namely, an intergovernmental preparatory process, a multi-stakeholder consultation process, the appointment by the President of the General Assembly of two co-facilitators, in June 2015, and a two-day high-level meeting of the Assembly. The process would result in an inter-governmentally agreed outcome document.

63. The Under-Secretary-General noted that, while the resolution provided a road map for the next steps for a review of the World Summit, the process and outcome would benefit from a system-wide common vision on the future of the information society. He suggested that CEB, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, come together to support Member States and multi-stakeholder communities in defining the future of the information society. He also mentioned that the outcome of the 10-year review of the World Summit could be an important part of the legacy of the Secretary-General. In concluding his remarks, he thanked the Secretary-General of ITU for his contributions and leadership.

64. The Secretary-General thanked both the Secretary-General of ITU and the Under-Secretary-General for their informative briefing, agreed that the system was in a position to contribute to the 10-year review process concerning the World Summit and in that regard would welcome and be guided by recommendations presented by ITU and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

III. Issues of system-wide interest: the data revolution and accountability

A. Data revolution

65. Opening the first part of the Board's substantive discussion on the data revolution, the Secretary-General noted that rapid access to reliable, comprehensive and accurate data was one of the critical components for achieving sustainable development. Access to data empowered people, was a requirement for accountability and transparency and formed the basis for good policy decisions. He noted that the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group, in their considerations regarding a United Nations system that is fit for purpose, had highlighted the need for transparency and a more strategic United Nations system approach to revolutionize United Nations data capacity.

66. While stressing that the United Nations system already had a considerable capacity for data, noting the role of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in its support to the Statistical Commission, the United Nations Group on the Information Society, which contributed to bringing information and communications technologies to all the world's people, the Board's own Information and Communication Technology Network as it worked to coordinate system-wide policy practices on information and communications technologies, and the Global Pulse initiative, which sought to leverage the "big data" phenomenon, the Secretary-General further congratulated UNDP for having been recognized by the International Aid Transparency Initiative for publishing open data from its projects around the world. The global benchmark for comprehensive aid information placed

UNDP first among 68 agencies that were evaluated, which was an impressive achievement that deserved emulation.

67. Nevertheless, more could and needed to be done to strengthen the United Nations system's data capacity, as well as position the United Nations system as a leader in the collection and use of data for achieving sustainable development. In that light, the Secretary-General noted that he had recently received the report of his Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, entitled "A world that counts: mobilizing the data revolution for sustainable development", and noted that the co-chair of the Group, Professor Enrico Giovannini, had agreed to present the results of the report via videoconference from Rome. In addition, the Secretary-General noted that the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), also a member of the Advisory Group, had agreed to inform the Board's discussion by highlighting strategic issues and opportunities for the United Nations system based on the report's findings.

68. The co-chair explained that the Advisory Group, during its two-month process, had attempted to produce a report that looked at the data revolution as a comprehensive phenomenon and as an opportunity to foster the sustainable development agenda.

69. He declared that, independently of the work of the Advisory Group, the data revolution was already happening as a result of new technologies that were leading to an exponential growth in the volume and types of data, along with an increase in the number of data producers, coupled with an increase in the use of data by an ever broader community of stakeholders. While the focus on data presented a significant opportunity for the post-2015 development agenda, it also came with risks that the United Nations and the broader development community must address. These included risks for privacy and human rights and the possibility that data of poor quality could be treated as data of high quality, thereby leading to poor decisions, followed by a breakdown in trust between communities and those that served them. He stressed the importance of a clear vision and strong leadership by the United Nations to overcome the risks and create an environment that encouraged the effective use of data to support the sustainable development agenda.

70. The co-chair elaborated on two significant issues that the data revolution must address: invisibility and inequality. He noted that many gaps existed in the collection of basic population data and many people remained uncounted. Compounding the challenge was that the sustainable development goals would cover new issues that were barely covered by existing official statistics. With regard to inequality, he noted that data were not often equally distributed between countries and people, and that without action, the divide between developed and developing countries and the divide between those who knew how to use the data and those who did not, would only grow. This was in addition to an existing divide between the private sector, which was harnessing the data revolution, and the public sector, which was lagging behind.

71. Regarding the report's recommendations, the co-chair noted that they covered a wide range of issues that went well beyond statistics, and drew the Board's attention to four distinct areas: principles and standards; technology, innovation and analysis; governance and leadership; and capacity and resources. He stressed the need to develop a global consensus on principles and standards for managing data,

to cover statistical, legal, technical and other issues, that would reduce the risk of harming people but would also harness the power of data. Regarding technology, it was critical to enhance sharing for the common good and emphasize the need for new resources for capacity-building and development, as well as leadership for coordination and mobilization.

72. The co-chair suggested that action on the data revolution could commence prior to any agreement on the sustainable development goals, through, for example, the development of new statistical standards to cover the domains that were not yet sufficiently visible, as well as through strengthening the quality of existing data and establishing linkages with non-official producers of data. He further suggested that each international organization could contribute by disseminating all existing data in open formats, which would send a strong global signal. This could be coupled with an effort to improve the quality of data produced by international organizations. He noted that organizations had invested significantly in individual capacity and suggested a potential new direction of constructing a common "statistical cloud". Further actions, that he characterized as "quick wins", included the establishment of an data laboratory in relation to the sustainable development goals, so as to demonstrate the feasibility of the new approaches mentioned in the report of the Advisory Group, which could lead to a platform for communities to explore data that includes a capacity to visualize.

73. The co-chair, in his remarks, also highlighted the need for an increase in investment in order to build capacity and suggested that the third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in 2015, might offer an opportunity to address that aspect of the data revolution, leading to a decision to open a new stream of financing for data for development. In tandem with the identification of resources, it was important to increase the coordination of statistical capacity programmes, particularly through the building of data innovation networks. Furthermore, he suggested that organizing a world forum on data for sustainable development would support the effort to strengthen global partnerships for data on sustainable development goals and could serve as a global user forum and a way to broker global public and private partnerships for sharing data, especially for data owned by the private sector. Such an event could be convened every three years, with a proposal that the first one be organized by the end of 2015.

74. The co-chair concluded his remarks by noting that during the process of preparing the report, the Advisory Group had received many comments as part of an outreach phase, and that the leadership role of the United Nations remained unquestioned. He noted that organizations across the United Nations system were already engaged in much of this work, but that the sustainable development goals presented an opportunity to develop a data capacity not just for monitoring but for achieving the goals, although all aspects of the data revolution would require substantial additional investment to cover new subjects and to ensure that no groups would be excluded.

75. After thanking the co-chair for his enlightening and informative presentation, the Secretary-General invited the Executive Secretary of ECLAC to offer her comments.

76. The Executive Secretary noted that significant quantities of data remained in the hands of the private sector and that the United Nations had a key role to play in ensuring that all data could be used as a global public good, especially through the

brokering of public and private partnerships to share data. The Organization was also well placed to strengthen and empower the public capacity to realize the potential of data for monitoring and taking action. She emphasized the need for standards and principles and for pressing for an open United Nations and open governments. In concluding her comments, she suggested the creation of an inter-agency working group, under the auspices of the three pillars of CEB — the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group — to present a programme to the Board that would examine ways for the United Nations to leverage "big data" as part of the data revolution, and to put data at the centre of the global public good, which was a task only the United Nations could achieve.

77. During the open discussion, members of CEB congratulated the co-chair on his presentation and, in particular, for the comprehensive and concise report, which provided clear guidance on leveraging data in all forms to support the sustainable development agenda. Members noted that topics such as data coverage, reliability and access had emerged as key issues and highlighted the importance of building those issues into the fabric of the post-2015 implementation agenda and the sustainable development goals. Members of the Board agreed that a revolution in the use of technology and data to solve development problems was already under way, but noted that even though the development community had not leveraged the capability to its fullest capacity, it was not starting from zero, highlighting in particular the substantial basis for coordination that existed within the United Nations statistics community as well as the support for expert groups on data relating to the Millennium Development Goals. There was general agreement, therefore, that responses to the report on the data revolution should focus on strengthening existing mechanisms, including existing data repositories maintained by many organizations. In this regard, the discussion revealed a high degree of collaboration across organizations on data collection and analysis.

78. Also during the discussion, members of the Board raised several topics that should be addressed in any response to the report. Noting the importance of leading by example, members remarked on the need to establish standards and principles for an open United Nations and highlighted the leadership role of the United Nations in advocating for open access to all data. Members also recognized that data governance was needed to ensure that the standards and principles were applied in practice. In that regard, CEB members noted the importance of ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of data, particularly in sensitive areas such as humanitarian and relief operations. Furthermore, members noted the link to cybersecurity to ensure data integrity and also called for increased access to data, which several members suggested needed to be addressed, indicating that institutional leaders must be willing to overcome internal barriers to the sharing of data.

79. Members recognized that although considerable excitement surrounded new forms of non-traditional data, monitoring and reporting on the achievement of sustainable development goals needed to be based upon a foundation of national statistics of good quality, and therefore support for strengthening that area needed to become a critical component of any action in response to the data revolution.

80. In closing the discussion, the co-chair affirmed that, compared to the public sector, the private sector had made great strides in its capability to collect and leverage data, and that, without action being taken, the gaps in data usage between

the private and public sector would widen. He also stressed that beyond the collection and organization of data, the United Nations community needed to invest in analytics so as to better use data for planning and to work towards an alignment of the data with decision cycles of organizations. He reiterated that the challenge involved not only statistics, which as many had remarked, already existed upon a solid foundation, but also exploiting big data for the sustainable development goals. He encouraged the creation of a data laboratory in relation to the goals and bringing data scientists to work alongside the statisticians. He concluded with three points, starting with the need to improve the human capital to use data, and reiterated a recommendation within the report to establish a worldwide statistical education programme. Second, he noted the need for additional resources to expand the types of data available, since it was critical to integrate traditional data with new forms of data. Third, he stressed that the leadership of the United Nations system comprised a powerful and unique force and therefore noted that CEB played an essential leadership role in realizing a data revolution for sustainable development.

81. The Secretary-General thanked the co-chair for his presentation and the members of CEB for their constructive contributions to the discussion. He commented on the importance of a data revolution and the Board agreed that the United Nations system urgently needed to form a coherent approach to the data revolution.

82. The Board called upon the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group, through a coordinated effort drawing on their respective areas of expertise and in collaboration with existing inter-agency mechanisms, to develop a coherent programme of work focusing on carrying forward a data revolution to be presented to CEB at its first regular session for 2015. UNDP, UNESCO, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the regional commissions and the World Bank Group all agreed to lead this effort.

B. Accountability

83. In opening the discussion on accountability, the Secretary-General noted that, as deliberations towards a post-2015 development agenda were advancing, increased attention was being paid to the need for a monitoring and accountability framework that was commensurate with the ambitious goals of the future sustainable development agenda. Such a framework needed to be coherent, multilayered and inclusive. He added that the United Nations system had an important contribution to make in supporting Member States in the establishment of a framework and as one of its key stakeholders. For the system to be effective in this regard, it needed to strengthen its own systems of accountability and become more results-oriented and transparent. He invited the Board to share its views on how the United Nations system could strengthen its ability to deliver measureable results and assume individual responsibility for collective outcomes.

84. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC and coordinator of the regional commissions served as moderator of the discussion. She invited the Board to focus the debate on the United Nations perspective on the future monitoring and review framework for the post-2015 agenda. In particular, she asked participants to

concentrate their interventions on the role and contribution of the United Nations system in strengthening national ownership and capacity, facilitating broad participation, supporting local approaches and empowering country teams. Before opening the floor for discussion, she invited the Administrator of UNDP and the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs to speak about accountability, at the country level and in the global dimension.

85. The Administrator of UNDP informed the Board that 2 million of the 5 million respondents reached through the online survey on the post-2015 development agenda reported "honest and responsive government" as a top priority. This indicated a high degree of engagement and heightened expectations regarding monitoring and accountability at the country level. She emphasized that inclusive monitoring and national target setting would be critically important for ensuring local ownership of the sustainable development goals. In this regard, it was essential that the United Nations system work actively with local communities. Successful examples of civil society holding local governments accountable could be found in Malawi and Zambia, for example. In this context, she underscored that the United Nations system needed to hold itself to the highest standards of accountability. One way to clearly demonstrate commitment to accountability would be for the organizations of the system to fully adhere to the principles of the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

86. Speaking on the global perspective of accountability, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, reflected on elements of the post-2015 monitoring and review framework. Owing to the universal and integrated nature of the post-2015 development agenda, the monitoring framework would need to apply to all countries and include a broad range of stakeholders. It would need to be voluntary and identify common challenges and lessons learned. Building on existing reporting mechanisms, the framework was expected to bring together evidence from the national, regional and global levels in a multilayered system of accountability. Establishing linkages with other intergovernmental bodies, including the General Assembly and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies, was also important. Equally critical was that the monitoring and review framework be underpinned by a solid indicator framework, a task to which the Statistical Commission could make an important contribution.

87. Before opening the floor for discussion, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC added a few observations on the regional perspective of accountability, noting that consultations on the regional dimension of a post-2015 accountability framework had been held in each of the five regions over the previous three months, under the auspices of the regional commissions. A number of messages had emerged from those consultations that highlighted the unique value of the regional dimension. Regional evaluations could serve as platforms for governments and civil society to share common experiences and challenges and exchange best practices and lessons learned. Furthermore, the regional level played an important role in linking global commitments with national efforts and in facilitating intersectoral approaches to monitoring and evaluation. Key to the effective monitoring of progress towards the achievement of the future sustainable development goals at the regional level would be the inclusion of regional organizations from beyond the United Nations system, such as the African Union, the Common Market of the South/Mercado Común del Sur or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

88. In the ensuing discussion, CEB members noted the challenges of monitoring a universal and transformative development agenda that was expected to extend, inter alia, into areas of trade, taxation and technology transfer. The United Nations system organizations needed to engage with their respective governing bodies to broaden awareness of the scope of the agenda and to promote the need for a holistic rather than sectoral approach. The regional commissions had an important role to play in this regard as a bridge between the national and global levels and as conveners on multisectoral issues.

89. Multi-stakeholder ownership of the agenda was a key component of effective accountability. Accountability mechanisms needed to be inclusive and include all three branches of government, as well as non-state actors. The importance of community-driven accountability, including community-generated data, was noted in this context. The United Nations system itself needed to be part of the post-2015 accountability framework and play an important role in upholding global norms and standards. CEB members pointed to a variety of initiatives that effectively integrated monitoring and accountability mechanisms, including the Education for All initiative and the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

90. In closing, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC thanked CEB members for their contributions to the discussion, which demonstrated the United Nations system's commitment to supporting Member States in the formulation and implementation of an effective post-2015 monitoring and review framework.

IV. Other matters

A. Dates and venue of future sessions

91. The Board formally approved the dates for its first regular session for 2015, to be held on 29 and 30 April, and thanked UNESCO for hosting the session at its Headquarters in Paris.

92. The dates for the Board's second regular session for 2015, to be held towards the end of November 2015 at United Nations Headquarters in New York, would be decided upon further consultation with Board members.

93. The Board also formally thanked UNODC for the offer to host the first regular session for 2016 in Vienna.

B. Nomination of the new Chair of the High-level Committee on Management

94. The Secretary-General paid tribute to the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization for his tenure as Chair of the High-level Committee on Management over the past two years.

95. He proposed, and the Board formally approved, the nomination of the Director General of UNESCO as the new Chair of the High-level Committee on Management, for a 2-year term.

C. Tribute to departing members

96. On behalf of the Board, the Secretary-General, during the Board's luncheon, paid tribute to the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union, who would be leaving his position at the end of 2014.

D. Special session on the United Nations system response to the Ebola crisis

97. The Secretary-General began the session by paying tribute to the Ebola Crisis Manager for Guinea, Marcel Rudasingwa, who had passed away suddenly. Noting the complexity of the crisis, with far-reaching political, security, developmental, humanitarian and economic consequences, the Secretary-General underscored the urgent need for the best possible action by the United Nations system and referred to his unprecedented decision to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER). He recognized that the robust and coordinated United Nations response, with community engagement, had brought improvements, for example, a slowing of the rate of transmission in parts of Liberia, which was a testament to the fact that the strategy of the United Nations, where implemented fully, was the right one. However, progress was uneven, with the rate of transmission still increasing in many places and possibly spreading to other countries. The United Nations system needed to continue to scale up its efforts.

98. Expressing appreciation for system-wide mobilization in support of UNMEER, the Secretary-General stressed the importance of continued unity of purpose, especially at the country level. In order to contain and end the outbreak, it was important to harmonize planning around common objectives and prioritize the deployment beyond the capital cities. Also critical was acting without delay to avert an emerging crisis in Mali and bolster preparedness elsewhere. In that context, the Secretary-General informed CEB that he had requested the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) to travel to Mali later that day and instructed UNMEER to deploy a team there.

99. The Secretary-General underscored the necessity of a holistic response, including helping the affected countries to recover and rebuild better. To that end, a rapid scaling-up of UNMEER capacity was needed, especially in ensuring coherent and consistent messaging across the United Nations system. Referring to the Ebola crisis as one of the greatest challenges the system had collectively faced, the Secretary-General ended his opening remarks by urging all members of CEB to reaffirm their commitment to delivering as "One United Nations".

100. Speaking via videoconference, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola outlined the rapidly changing situation, the complexity of the challenges faced and the urgency of achieving results. All those issues demanded massive international mobilization, as well as strong leadership and direction vis-à-vis an intricate mix of activities, with multiple actors involved. The Special Envoy shared key factors contributing to maximizing results, including efforts by the affected governments to improve their crisis management; activation of the resident coordinator system and clusters; the establishment of UNMEER and rapid mobilization of system-wide capacities; efforts to ensure coherent and harmonized

communications; and the creation of a global coalition to bring parties together. He commended the exemplary efforts by the United Nations system, with all entities contributing to different facets of the overall response.

101. Also speaking via videoconference, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMEER provided details of the devastating human and socioeconomic consequences of the Ebola crisis. The affected countries faced challenges in meeting the increased financial requirements needed to respond to the crisis; as they were experiencing reduced economic growth and decreased revenues as a result of the crisis. The impact was particularly grave at the community level, with many children becoming orphans or unable to attend school. Outlining significant improvements in some areas, he asserted that the right strategy was in place, under the strong leadership of the Secretary-General and with the support of the United Nations system in delivering as one.

102. Looking ahead, the Head of UNMEER underscored the need for a more geographically dispersed and rapid response to get ahead of the disease. Also critical was making smart collective decisions to prioritize limited resources. The resource implications of the disease's geographical spread, including to rural areas, as seen in Nigeria, and to other countries, such as Mali, were tremendous, and UNMEER was prepared to do its best in partnership with United Nations system organizations. He concluded by stressing four key requirements for the United Nations system on the ground: the deployment of more staff, especially in rural areas; coordinated system-wide action across all phases; continued prioritization of the Ebola response; and initiation of early recovery planning and efforts.

103. The Executive Director of UNICEF, who moderated the session, outlined the aim of reaffirming the United Nations system's unity of purpose and collective commitment to respond to the Ebola crisis as one United Nations. He invited CEB members to consider, in particular, how best to prioritize resources, address administrative bottlenecks and start addressing longer term implications.

104. Invited to take the floor, the Director General of WHO shared lessons learned from initial delays as well as from past crises, such as the 2011 outbreak of influenza A (H1N1), where key recommendations were not implemented. The situation as regards Ebola had become out of control in the three worst affected countries, which were vulnerable post-crisis countries with weak institutional and governance capacities and public health systems, where increased internal and cross-border migration and unsafe practices rooted in cultural traditions also played a key part. She attributed successes in such countries as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Senegal to national ownership and leadership, community engagement to change unsafe practices and the full implementation of public health measures. Furthermore, she expected fast-tracked innovation and technological development to contribute to preventing the spread of diseases from becoming out of control in the future. She stressed that on this occasion, the United Nations system must truly learn lessons.

105. The Director General noted that, despite the slowing transmission rate in the three most affected countries, achieving a transmission rate of zero would be challenging. It would require the United Nations system to update its current strategy. Where early cases were reported, such as in Mali, a timely scale-up of efforts was necessary, while in countries not yet affected, the preparedness and health-care capacities needed strengthening.

106. The President of the World Bank strongly echoed the urgent need to develop a plan to get to zero transmission at both the global and country levels, without which even innovative funding initiatives, such as Ebola bonds, would not be effective. He also underscored the importance of cash transfer programmes, which provided employment while relying on local people to fight the epidemic. To prevent endemicity, it was critically important to stop focusing on organizational reputations and territory and work under a streamlined command and control structure at both the global and country levels.

107. Thanking all the speakers, the Executive Director of UNICEF opened the floor for interventions. Members of CEB expressed agreement with the analysis provided and the complexity of the challenges faced. They recognized the specific role played by each entity as part of system-wide action, with, for example, the International Monetary Fund advocating for debt relief, UNDP facilitating salary payment to health-care workers and the World Food Programme providing logistical support. They underscored the importance of scaled-up efforts to quickly reach zero transmission and shared their concern about the geographical spread of the disease, with one member of the Board outlining the specific challenge posed in cities, particularly in slums, and another noting, in this regard, the need to engage local governments. In terms of partnerships, one member stressed the importance of carefully engaging and coordinating with regional groups, such as the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States.

108. Members of CEB, including, in particular, the Chair of the United Nations Development Group, strongly affirmed the critical importance of coordination and of the United Nations system delivering as one, particularly at the country level. Drawing parallels with the experiences of the system in addressing HIV/AIDS, one member underlined that strategy, coordination and reporting were essential in succeeding in achieving zero transmission. Another member expressed concern about the logistics capacity of United Nations operations, in view of the military scale-down by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America in Sierra Leone and the risk of airport closure in Mali.

109. While one CEB member recalled the need to stay focused on critical current requirements, several emphasized the importance of starting to plan for early recovery, for example through post-disaster needs assessments. They pointed out that such longer term perspectives, regarding such areas as food security, livelihood, education and health-care capacity, should be integrated into ongoing efforts. A few members of the Board expressed concern about discrimination and stigma against survivors, particularly widows and orphans, and stressed the need for public advocacy and assistance. One member also pointed out a concern relating to the treatment of nationals of the affected countries travelling overseas.

110. In the area of management, one CEB member outlined the ongoing effort to protect the health and security of United Nations staff and their families. This included in-country treatment and evacuation, for which many Member States had expressed support, including the announcement by the United States regarding making its treatment facility available to United Nations staff stationed in the affected countries who were not exclusively involved in the response to Ebola. Another CEB member expressed concern that United Nations medical clinics, the cost of which had so far been covered by UNDP, might become unsustainable unless a cost-sharing agreement was worked out, and urged agencies to factor in such costs

as part of a criticality exercise. Another problem pointed out by a member was the collapse of local health-care infrastructure, resulting in United Nations staff having no access to non-Ebola-related treatments. While the capacity of United Nations clinics had been increased to address this, an evacuation capacity for both Ebola and non-Ebola patients was still lacking.

111. Summing up the discussions, the Special Envoy on Ebola reiterated the urgent need to develop a plan to get to zero transmission and the importance of attending to staff safety, including for non-Ebola-related issues. Mr. Lake echoed the importance of coordination and delivering as one, within the United Nations system as well as with partners. The Deputy Secretary-General observed, with appreciation, the manifestation of collective determination of CEB Principals and, in particular, urged them to ensure maximum attention to Mali.

112. In conclusion, the Secretary-General thanked CEB members for their strong commitment to ensuring coordinated system-wide response. With regard to Mali, the Secretary-General had, in a telephone conversation earlier that day, assured the President of full mobilization of the United Nations system. In addition to dispatching the Director General of WHO and the Executive Director of UNAIDS, the Secretary-General had designated the Country Director of WHO as the temporary representative in Mali, pending the establishment, as soon as possible, of an UNMEER mission there. The President was appreciative of those efforts, which he considered were in the right direction. The Secretary-General concluded the session by underlining the reaffirmed unity of purpose and collective determination, adding that at the press encounter he would convey that message as the session's key outcome.